

INTRODUCTION TO CORAL REEFS UPPER LEVEL FOLLOW ALONG WORKSHEET

Complete this worksheet during the lesson.

1. Is coral a plant, rock, or animal? (Circle one).
2. Why are corals related to jellyfish and sea anemones?
3. Corals get _____% of their food from hunting with their stinging cells also called _____.
4. What is a mutualistic relationship?
5. What is zooxanthellae and what makes its relationship with coral mutualistic?
6. Do corals photosynthesize? Yes or no (Circle one).
7. Hard corals have skeletons made of _____ and soft corals have skeletons made of _____ or _____.
8. True or false: Soft corals rely more on their zooxanthellae for food compared to hard corals.
9. Give two examples each of hard and soft coral species:
10. How do corals reproduce?
11. Coral reefs cover _____% of the ocean floor but support _____% of all marine life.

12. What conditions do corals need to grow (generally speaking)?

13. List 3 reasons why coral reefs are important:

14. Name and describe 4 specific threats to coral reefs (don't just say 'pollution'- give examples):

15. Is a bleached coral a dead coral? Yes or No (Circle one).

16. How can you tell a coral is dead?

17. Name and describe 4 ways we can help protect coral reefs:

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Complete this worksheet during the lesson.

1. Is coral a plant, rock, or animal? (Circle one).

2. Why are corals related to jellyfish and sea anemones?

They are all Cnidarians/belong to the phylum cnidaria
They have tentacles with stinging cells called nematocysts

3. Corals get 10% of their food from hunting with their stinging cells also called nematocysts.

4. What is a mutualistic relationship?

A relationship between organisms where they both benefit

5. What is zooxanthellae and what makes its relationship with coral mutualistic?

Zooxanthellae is a single celled algae like organism.

Zooxanthellae gives coral 90% of its food and color, while coral gives zooxanthellae a home

6. Do corals photosynthesize? Yes or no (Circle one).

*coral animals do not, the zooxanthellae that live inside of them do

7. Hard corals have skeletons made of limestone and soft corals have skeletons made of gorgonian or chitin.

8. True or false: Soft corals rely more on their zooxanthellae for food compared to hard corals.

9. Give two examples each of hard and soft coral species:

Hard corals: brain, star, elkhorn, staghorn

Soft corals: sea fan, sea whip, sea rod

10. How do corals reproduce?

Mass broadcast spawning

11. Coral reefs cover 1% of the ocean floor but support 25% of all marine life.

12. What conditions do corals need to grow (generally speaking)?

Shallow Water (<80-160 ft.), Clean/Clear, Warm (~73-84°F), Sunlit water

13. List 3 reasons why coral reefs are important:

- storm protection
- biodiversity/habitat
- tourism/jobs
- food source
- medicine

14. Name and describe 4 specific threats to coral reefs (don't just say 'pollution'- give examples):

- Physical damage: anchors, touching coral, prop scars, harmful fishing practices, deforestation/development
- Overfishing
- Pollution: stormwater, nutrients/wastewater, sunscreen, runoff
- Marine debris: trash in the ocean, microplastics
- Climate change: warming causing bleaching, ocean acidification, increased storm frequency and intensity
- Coral disease

15. Is a bleached coral a dead coral? Yes or No (Circle one).

16. How can you tell a coral is dead?

There is algae growing on the skeleton

17. Name and describe 4 ways we can help protect coral reefs:

- Reduce physical damage, don't touch coral, mooring buoys
- Support sustainable fishing
- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Clean up trash
- Improve water quality/reduce pollution: wear mineral sunscreen
- Reduce carbon footprint
- Coral rescue/restoration
- Educate others!